



**Building Relationships Kit**

## **Building Relationship**

Building relationships with all of the after-school stakeholders is incredibly important, however, nothing is more important than the youth to youth and youth to adult relationships that you have the opportunity to build in the after-school program. One of the ways to do this is to provide opportunities for youth to learn the names of all of the people in the program, find common ground with others in the group, and learn to work together as a team. Following are a variety of activities, collected from years of experience on how to focus on building relationships.

### **Building Relationships—Activities**

#### **Group Juggle**

1. Have students make a circle.
2. One person is designated as the leader.
3. On the ground, beside the leader, are 10-12 soft objects. (You can even use a paper ball)
4. The leader picks up one object, selects another youth that is not right next to him/her, by looking at him/her and SAYING the person's name, and gently tosses that item to him/her.
5. Then the person catching the item, repeats the process of selection but also can not throw it to the leader until everyone has had a chance to catch and toss.
6. This process continues in a PATTERN, until the last person has the item and then tosses it back to the leader saying his/her name.

A second round should be played exactly the same, and in exactly the same order.

Once round 2 is played and youth understands what is going on, the game progresses.

The leader starts with object #1, repeats the pattern. However, this time when the person he/she has originally tossed to has tossed the first item, the leader then tosses a second item, saying the name, simultaneously with the other players tossing and saying names.

Play continues until the leader has had all items returned.

#### **Friends for Life**

Have youth introduce themselves to someone. Youth exchange names, handshakes (making eye contact and with a firm hand). After the introductions, the youth say each other's name as they give each other a High 5. This becomes the High 5 partner and each time "High Five" is called, these two will return to each other, do a High Five and say the other person's name.

Continue in the same pattern having students find another person, exchange names and handshakes. The second person becomes the Low 10 partner, and they clap hands together and say one another's name. This then is the Low 10 partner. Continue with a Do-Si-Do partner, a Booty Bump partner, and a Hand Jive partner. While they are finding new partners, they need to keep coming back to the other partners, remembering to say their partner's name.

**Chugga** (Note: There is no correct way to Chugga, youth members should make it up.)

Hey there, \_\_\_\_\_  
You're a real cool cat.  
With a little of this (snap)  
And a little of that (snap).  
Don't be afraid to boogie and jam  
Just stand up and Chugga, as fast as you can  
Chugga up (Chugga, Chugga, Chugga, Chugga)  
Chugga down (Chugga, Chugga, Chugga, Chugga)  
Chugga right (Chugga, Chugga, Chugga, Chugga)  
Chugga left (Chugga, Chugga, Chugga, Chugga)

### **Amoeba**

The purpose of this activity is to determine how many things you have in common with one another.  
First, youth pair together and find 1 thing that they have in common. The pairs share.  
Pairs group with other pairs, repeat the process.  
Fours group with other fours, repeat the process.  
Entire group works with one another, repeat the process.

### **Venning**

Create a Venn Diagram on the floor with yarn. The circles should be large, approximately 6 feet across and overlapping in the center. A separate circle should also be made. Ask youth questions and then have them stand in the Venn. For example if you said males, all the males would stand in one part of the Venn that does not overlap the other circle. When you call female, then the females would stand in the other circle. There would be no one in the overlap. However, if you said stand in this circle if your name has an "s" in it, and then asked anyone with an "a" in their name to stand in the other. Any youth with both an "s" and an "a" would be able to stand in the overlapping circles. Youth with neither an "s" or an "a" would stand in the separate circle.  
After each question, record the names of the youth in each part of the Venn and in the other circle, on a chart. Work with the chart afterwards and find out how many youth were in the center or the Venn more than once, in the separate circle more than once, and think about what other questions could be asked.

## **This Is My Friend**

Youth partner with one another.

Youth interview one another and find out:

the other youth's name and something interesting about the other person (number of brothers and sisters, oldest child, a twin, lived in another country, etc.)

When the interview time is over youth forms a large circle, standing next to their partner.

When it is their turn, the youth states, "This is my new friend, \_\_\_\_\_." And something special about them is \_\_\_\_\_.

Activity continues until all youth have been introduced.

## **Circle of Hands**

Have youth trace around one of their hands and cut it out. (This is best done on multi-cultural colored construction paper). When they have cut out their hand, youth should decorate it or write on it something that is special about him/herself.

Youth then share their hand with the group and then glue stick the hand onto a piece of chart paper in a circle, overlapping the fingers of the hands.

In the center, write the words, "We Are Special".

## **Bingo**

Create a Bingo grid. In the grid write different statements that different youth would be able to sign if the statement was true for them. For example, Favorite color is red, Has a "J" in my name, Favorite cartoon is Sponge Bob, etc.

Have youth then play Bingo by introducing themselves to others and asking them to sign in the square that has a truthful statement for them. When someone calls BINGO, honor each of the people who signed a space with an accolade and then honor the winner with a collection of accolades.

## **Trading Cards**

Give each person a 3" x 5" index card. On the card, have them draw a picture of themselves. They should also write "stats" about themselves on the card: name, age, # of brothers and sisters, best friends, favorite food, etc. Youth then trade cards with one another or at least share information from the card with one another.

## **You and What You Like**

Have youth talk with another youth and find out 3 favorites that the youth has. The process is reversed. After youth have shared information with one another, then the youth introduce each other to the group, giving the other's name and the 3 favorites that the youth has named.

## **What's Up?**

Youth sits in a circle. During What's Up, youth can praise one another for something special, wish others a happy birthday, share a success that they have had or share a story. During this time, youth may also share a concern or problem that they are experiencing and ask for their friends to share "best practices". For example, a youth may want to hear about a best practice around finishing homework. If a youth asks for "best practices", then when another youth offers a suggestion, the person who asked may only respond with a "Thank you". They are not to indicate that they have already tried it, or it won't work, etc., they simply thank the person for what they offered. As a leader you take notes, recap the notes if necessary, ask if anyone else has something to say, but you do not add your comments until the very end when everyone else has spoken, and it is not important that you offer up any opinion.

## **The Tower**

A group of 5-8 people form a team. A team is given 20 pieces of paper and asked to build the tallest tower that they can, using only the 20 pieces of paper that they were given. They may not use anything other than the paper. The team has four minutes to build the tower.

## **The Puzzle**

A group of 4-5 people form a team. They are given a children's puzzle of around 25 or so pieces. The puzzle pieces are divided evenly among the team members and given to them picture down. The team will work to put the puzzle together in 3 rounds.

Round 1: No talking or communicating in any way with one another (1.5 minutes)

Round 2: Communication but not verbal or with words (1.5 minutes)

Round 3: Communicate freely, body language and words.

Debrief the activity with youth and ask them what they have learned about communication. Ask them how they will use communication to be sure that everyone is included and doing their best work.

## **Building A Bridge**

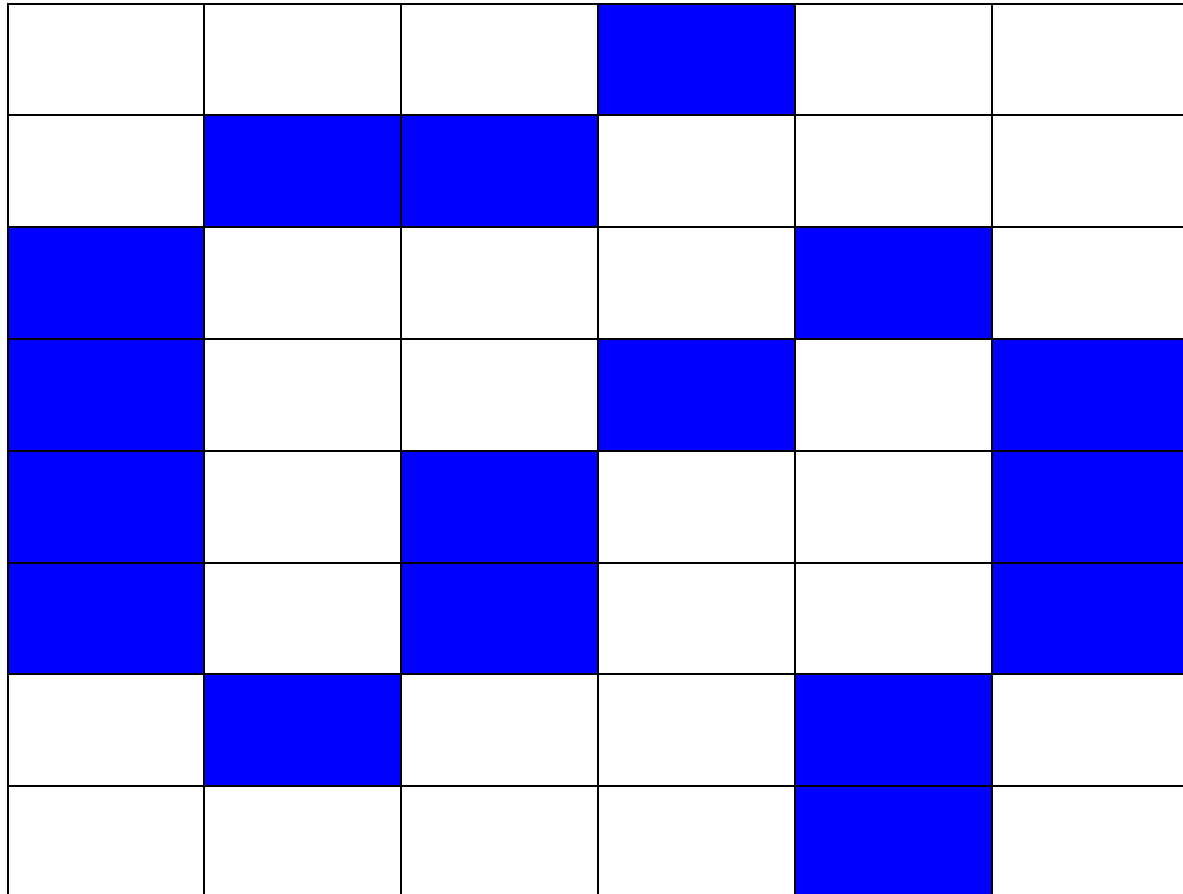
A group of 4-5 people form a team. Each team is given 3 Post-Its and 7 cotton balls. The challenge is for the team to build a bridge that will span at least 12 inches using only the Post-Its and the cotton balls. After 4 minutes is over, debrief with the team about the strategies they used not only to build the bridge but to get everyone's input on how to build the bridge. Ask members of the groups if they felt included and what was done to make them feel included or not included.

## Group Picture

Youth forms groups of 4-5 people. Each person in the group is given one crayola. The whole group is given one piece of paper. Ask the groups to draw a place that they like to visit. Each youth may only use the crayola that he/she has. When picture is finished (or 4 minutes is gone) ask youth about how it felt being limited to only one color and trying to guide the process of creating a picture. Ask youth what strategies they used to cooperate.

## Stepping Stones

Create a grid of 48 “stones”. Map a course across the stones from one end to another. See the sample below.



When stepping to find the correct path, a player may step backward, forward, to the side right or left, back right diagonal, back left diagonal, forward right diagonal, or forward left diagonal, to find the stone that is on the path. If the youth steps on a stone that is not on the path, blow on an air horn, ring a bell, or blow a whistle to signal that they are on the wrong step. If you step on an incorrect stone, your turn is over, but you must reverse your way out of the stepping stone maze.

Each youth takes his/her turn, while the remainder of the group helps them to think through the steps that they need to take. When a youth finally makes it across have the others take the same path to get the other side.

When this activity is over, ask youth how it felt about crossing the Stepping Stone Maze. Ask them how it felt when they got beeped. Ask them why the beep is so annoying when it is the beeps that ultimately allow them to find the correct path. Ask them when they get beeped in their day-to-day life and how that makes them feel. Also ask about how it felt to have the support of the team and when that sort of support happens in their life.



For more information, contact  
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